

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 CG-00 COME-00 FMC-01

TRSE-00 DOTE-00 /032 W

----- 076322

R 090729Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5684

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL PERTH

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, AS, US

SUBJ: SHIPPING: TRADE PRACTICE ACT DISCRIMINATION

AGAINST IN-BOUND CONFERENCES

REF: A. STATE 107298 NOTAL

B. CANBERRA 1919

C. CANBERRA 1170

1. EMBASSY OFFICER AGAIN DISCUSSED TP ACT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST IN-BOUND CONFERENCES (REF A) WITH ROWLAND, DEPT. OF TRANSPORT, MAY 9, REITERATING US CONTINUING CONCERN OVER PROBLEM CAUSED BY STILL UNRECTIFIED DRAFTING ERROR. ROWLAND SAID TRANSPORT MINISTER JONES, WHO FULLY SHARES OUR CONCERN, HAS DECIDED TONWUSH AHEAD WITH AMENDING LEGISLATION.

2. HOWEVER, SITUATION IS COMPLICATED BY ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPT. INSISTENCE THAT AMENDING LEGISLATION ALSO CORRECT UNRELATED PROBLEM INVOLVING TP ACT AND TANKER POLICY (I.E. TP ACT NOW PROHIBITS TANKER

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OPERATORS FROM GEETING TOGETHER, AS JONES HAS DIRECTED

THEM TO DO (REF C), TO PRODUCE INDUSTRY PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING JONES' PROPOSAL TO RESERVE 40 PERCENT OF AUSTRALIAN OIL IMPORTS FOR AUST. VESSELS). CABINET HAS NOT YET APPROVED BILL TO ACCOMPLISH THESE TWO AMENDMENTS, BUT ROWLAND IS OPTIMISTIC APPROVAL WILL BE GIVEN SOON. ONCE THAT IS DONE, AMENDING LEGISLATION MUST BE PASSED BY BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. ALTHOUGH HE DOUBTS AMENDMENT TO END DISCRIMINATION AGAINST IN-BOUND CONFERENCES WILL BE CONTROVERSIAL, ROWLAND IS FAR LESS CERTAIN THAT TANKER POLICY AMENDMENT WILL FAIL TO STIR UP DEBATES. THUS, EXTENDED DELAY IN PASSAGE IS QUITE POSSIBLE.

3. COMMENT: ROWLAND OBVIOUSLY VERY CONCERNED OVER DELAY IN CORRECTING DRAFTING ERROR AND STILL WORRIED THAT MISCHIEF-MAKER MIGHT SEEK COURT ORDER TO DISBAND IN-BOUND CONFERENCES UNDER PRESENT TP ACT. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW SNAIL-PACED DEVELOPMENTS.

4. HOWEVER, SINCE OUR CONCERN IS WELL KNOWN TO AND FULLY SHARED BY GOA, WE SEE NO WISDOM IN PRESSING AUSTRALIANS FURTHER AT THIS STAGE AS THEY TRY TO CORRECT THEIR OWN MISTAKE WITH MINIMAL EMBARRASSMENT AND COMPLICATIONS. LIKEWISE, WE SEE NO MERIT AND CONSIDERABLE RISK IN LETTING WORD OF THIS PROBLEM LEAK OUT AND RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT CONTINUE TO URGE US MARITIME INDUSTRY TO AVOID PUBLIC COMMENT ON IT.
GREEN

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